

Appl. No. : 09/879,981  
Amdt. dated : June 1, 2004  
Reply to Office Action dated March 30, 2004

### **IN THE CLAIMS**

Please cancel claims 15 through 21 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

Please amend claims 2 through 14 and 22 as follows:

1. (Canceled)
2. (Currently Amended) A method for providing a user-specific response, the method comprising:
  - receiving an inquiry from a user;
  - associating the user with a search profile designated by a subscriber on a network;
  - conducting a search delimited by the search profile in a database on the network;
  - providing a search result to the user;
  - reporting the search result to the subscriber;
  - receiving a request for additional information from the user;
  - initiating a contact between the user and an expert in response to the request for additional information; and
  - receiving the expert's response and forwarding the response to the user.

[[2.]]22. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 wherein the inquiry is in a natural-language form.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2 wherein the receiving an inquiry from a user further comprises indexing the inquiry according to pre-defined search terms.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2 wherein the inquiry is made by selecting at least one topic from a plurality of pre-defined topics.

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5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2 wherein the search profile is pre-defined by the subscriber.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 wherein the conducting a search further comprises accessing ~~at least~~ more than one database.

7. (Previously Presented) A network for providing responses to an inquiry from a user affiliated with a network subscriber, the network comprising:

a database containing information of interest to the user and a processor coupled to the database, the processor programmed with a software to:

receive an inquiry from the user;

associate the user with a service profile to determine the scope of the search;

search for at least one response to the user's inquiry in the database;

provide the at least one response to the user; and

forward the inquiry to a consultant in response to a request for further information by the user.

8. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 7 wherein the processor is further programmed with a software to report the inquiry and the at least one response to the network subscriber.

9. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 7 wherein the processor is further programmed with a software to search at least one other database for a response to the user's inquiry.

10. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 7 wherein in the processor is further programmed with a software to report the inquiry and the at least one response to the network subscriber.

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11. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 7 wherein the processor is further programmed with a software to forward the consultant's response to the user.

12. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 7 wherein the processor is further programmed to update a database to include the consultant's response.

13. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 7 wherein the network updates the database.

14. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 7 wherein the network subscriber designates the consultant.

15. (Canceled)

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled)

18. (Canceled)

19. (Canceled)

20. (Canceled)

21. (Canceled)

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Please add the following new claims:

23. (New) A method for providing a user-specific response over an internet network, the method comprising:

- receiving an inquiry from a user via said network;
- receiving a search profile designated by a subscriber via said network;
- associating the user with said subscriber designated search profile;
- providing a database for searching by the user;
- conducting a search limited by the subscriber designated search profile in said database on said network;
- providing a search result to the user;
- reporting the search result to the subscriber;
- receiving a request for additional information from the user to narrow the search;
- initiating a contact between the user and an expert via said network in response to the request for additional information;
- receiving a response via the network from the expert and forwarding the response to the user;
- and
- updating said database based on the inquiry from the user.

24. (New) The method of claim 23 wherein the inquiry is in a natural-language form.

25. (New) The method of claim 23 wherein the receiving an inquiry from a user further comprises indexing the inquiry according to pre-defined search terms.

26. (New) The method of claim 23 wherein the inquiry is made by selecting at least one topic from a plurality of pre-defined topics.

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27. (New) The method of claim 23 wherein the search profile is pre-defined by the subscriber.

28. (New) The method of claim 23 wherein the conducting a search further comprises accessing more than one database.